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Amendment

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Offered by:

REP. FLEISCHMANN, 18th Dist.

REP. BYE, 19th Dist.

To: Subst. House Bill No. **5422**

File No. 373

Cal. No. 206

"AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES."

1 After the last section, add the following and renumber sections and
2 internal references accordingly:

3 "Sec. 501. Section 10-16p of the 2010 supplement to the general
4 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
5 (*Effective July 1, 2010*):

6 (a) As used in sections 10-16o to 10-16s, inclusive, 10-16u, 17b-749a
7 and 17b-749c:

8 (1) "School readiness program" means a nonsectarian program that
9 (A) meets the standards set by the department pursuant to subsection
10 (b) of this section and the requirements of section 10-16q, and (B)
11 provides a developmentally appropriate learning experience of not less
12 than four hundred fifty hours and one hundred eighty days for eligible
13 children, except as provided in subsection (d) of section 10-16q;

14 (2) "Eligible children" means children three and four years of age
15 and children five years of age who are not eligible to enroll in school
16 pursuant to section 10-15c, or who are eligible to enroll in school and
17 will attend a school readiness program pursuant to section 10-16t;

18 (3) "Priority school" means a school in which forty per cent or more
19 of the lunches served are served to students who are eligible for free or
20 reduced price lunches pursuant to federal law and regulations,
21 excluding such a school located in a priority school district pursuant to
22 section 10-266p or in a former priority school district receiving a grant
23 pursuant to subsection (c) of this section and, on and after July 1, 2001,
24 excluding such a school in a transitional school district receiving a
25 grant pursuant to section 10-16u;

26 (4) "Severe need school" means a school in a priority school district
27 pursuant to section 10-266p or in a former priority school district in
28 which forty per cent or more of the lunches served are served to
29 students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches;

30 (5) "Accredited" means accredited by the National Association for
31 the Education of Young Children, a Head Start on-site program review
32 instrument or a successor instrument pursuant to federal regulations,
33 or otherwise meeting such criteria as may be established by the
34 commissioner, in consultation with the Commissioner of Social
35 Services, unless the context otherwise requires;

36 (6) "Year-round" means fifty weeks per year, except as provided in
37 subsection (d) of section 10-16q;

38 (7) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Education; and

39 (8) "Department" means the Department of Education.

40 (b) (1) The Department of Education shall be the lead agency for
41 school readiness. For purposes of this section and section 10-16u,
42 school readiness program providers eligible for funding from the
43 Department of Education shall include local and regional boards of

44 education, regional educational service centers, family resource centers
45 and providers of child day care centers, as defined in section 19a-77,
46 Head Start programs, preschool programs and other programs that
47 meet such standards established by the Commissioner of Education.
48 The department shall establish standards for school readiness
49 programs. The standards may include, but need not be limited to,
50 guidelines for staff-child interactions, curriculum content, including
51 preliteracy development, lesson plans, parent involvement, staff
52 qualifications and training, transition to school and administration.
53 The department shall develop age-appropriate developmental skills
54 and goals for children attending such programs. The commissioner, in
55 consultation with the Commissioners of Higher Education and Social
56 Services and other appropriate entities, shall develop a continuing
57 education training program for the staff of school readiness programs.

58 (2) (A) For purposes of this section, prior to July 1, 2015, "staff
59 qualifications" means there is in each classroom an individual who has
60 at least the following: [(1)] (i) A childhood development associate
61 credential or an equivalent credential issued by an organization
62 approved by the Commissioner of Education, and [nine credits or
63 more, and on and after July 1, 2005,] twelve credits or more, in early
64 childhood education or child development, as determined by the
65 Commissioner of Higher Education, after consultation with the
66 Commissioners of Education and Social Services, from an institution of
67 higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher
68 Education or regionally accredited; [(2)] (ii) an associate's degree with
69 [nine credits or more, and on and after July 1, 2005,] twelve credits or
70 more, in early childhood education or child development, as
71 determined by the Commissioner of Higher Education, after
72 consultation with the Commissioners of Education and Social Services,
73 from such an institution; [(3)] (iii) a four-year degree with [nine credits
74 or more, and on and after July 1, 2005,] twelve credits or more, in early
75 childhood education or child development, as determined by the
76 Commissioner of Higher Education, after consultation with the
77 Commissioners of Education and Social Services, from such an

78 institution; or [(4)] (iv) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an
79 endorsement in early childhood education. [or special education, and
80 on]

81 (B) On and after July 1, 2015, "staff qualifications" means [there is in
82 each classroom an individual who has at least the following: (A) A
83 bachelor's degree in early childhood education or childhood
84 development, or in a related field approved by the Commissioner of
85 Education from an institution of higher education accredited by the
86 Board of Governors of Higher Education or regionally accredited; or
87 (B) certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an endorsement in
88 early childhood education or special education] for each preschool
89 program accepting school readiness funds that (i) at least fifty per cent
90 of those individuals with the primary responsibility for a group of
91 children (I) hold certification pursuant to section 10-145b with an
92 endorsement in early childhood education, or (II) hold a bachelor's
93 degree from an institution of higher education accredited by the Board
94 of Governors of Higher Education or regionally accredited, (ii) such
95 remaining individuals hold an associate degree from an institution of
96 higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher
97 Education or regionally accredited, and (iii) all such individuals
98 described in clause (i)(II) and clause (ii) of this subparagraph have
99 completed a program of study relating to early childhood education
100 approved by the Commissioners of Education and Higher Education,
101 or its equivalent.

102 (c) The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the
103 Commissioner of Social Services, shall establish a grant program to
104 provide spaces in accredited school readiness programs for eligible
105 children who reside in priority school districts pursuant to section 10-
106 266p or in former priority school districts as provided in this
107 subsection. Under the program, the grant shall be provided, in
108 accordance with this section, to the town in which such priority school
109 district or former priority school district is located. Eligibility shall be
110 determined for a five-year period based on an applicant's designation
111 as a priority school district for the initial year of application, except

112 that if a school district that receives a grant pursuant to this subsection
113 is no longer designated as a priority school district at the end of such
114 five-year period, such former priority school district shall continue to
115 be eligible to receive a grant pursuant to this subsection. Grant awards
116 shall be made annually contingent upon available funding and a
117 satisfactory annual evaluation. The chief elected official of such town
118 and the superintendent of schools for such priority school district or
119 former priority school district shall submit a plan for the expenditure
120 of grant funds and responses to the local request for proposal process
121 to the Departments of Education and Social Services. The departments
122 shall jointly review such plans and shall each approve the portion of
123 such plan within its jurisdiction for funding. The plan shall: (1) Be
124 developed in consultation with the local or regional school readiness
125 council established pursuant to section 10-16r; (2) be based on a needs
126 and resource assessment; (3) provide for the issuance of requests for
127 proposals for providers of accredited school readiness programs,
128 provided, after the initial requests for proposals, facilities that have
129 been approved to operate a child care program financed through the
130 Connecticut Health and Education Facilities Authority and have
131 received a commitment for debt service from the Department of Social
132 Services pursuant to section 17b-749i, are exempt from the requirement
133 for issuance of annual requests for proposals; and (4) identify the need
134 for funding pursuant to section 17b-749a in order to extend the hours
135 and days of operation of school readiness programs in order to
136 provide child day care services for children attending such programs.

137 (d) (1) The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the
138 Commissioner of Social Services, shall establish a competitive grant
139 program to provide spaces in accredited school readiness programs for
140 eligible children who reside (A) in an area served by a priority school
141 or a former priority school as provided for in subdivision (2) of this
142 subsection, (B) in a town ranked one to fifty when all towns are ranked
143 in ascending order according to town wealth, as defined in subdivision
144 (26) of section 10-262f, whose school district is not a priority school
145 district pursuant to section 10-266p, or (C) in a town formerly a town

146 described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, as provided for in
147 said subdivision (2). A town in which a priority school is located, a
148 regional school readiness council, pursuant to subsection (c) of section
149 10-16r, for a region in which such a school is located or a town
150 described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision may apply for such a
151 grant in an amount not to exceed one hundred seven thousand dollars
152 per priority school or town. Eligibility shall be determined for a five-
153 year period based on an applicant's designation as having a priority
154 school or being a town described in subparagraph (B) of this
155 subdivision for the initial year of application. Grant awards shall be
156 made annually contingent upon available funding and a satisfactory
157 annual evaluation. The chief elected official of such town and the
158 superintendent of schools of the school district or the regional school
159 readiness council shall submit a plan, as described in subsection (c) of
160 this section, for the expenditure of such grant funds to the Department
161 of Education. In awarding grants pursuant to this subsection, the
162 commissioner shall give preference to applications submitted by
163 regional school readiness councils and may, within available
164 appropriations, provide a grant in excess of one hundred seven
165 thousand dollars to towns with two or more priority schools in such
166 district. A town or regional school readiness council awarded a grant
167 pursuant to this subsection shall use the funds to purchase spaces for
168 such children from providers of accredited school readiness programs.

169 (2) (A) Commencing with the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, if a
170 town received a grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection
171 and is no longer eligible to receive such a grant, the town may receive
172 a phase-out grant for each of the three fiscal years following the fiscal
173 year such town received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of
174 this subsection.

175 (B) The amount of such phase-out grants shall be determined as
176 follows: (i) For the first fiscal year following the fiscal year such town
177 received its final grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in
178 an amount that does not exceed seventy-five per cent of the grant
179 amount such town received for the town or school's final year of

180 eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection; (ii) for the
181 second fiscal year following the fiscal year such town received its final
182 grant pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that
183 does not exceed fifty per cent of the grant amount such town received
184 for the town's or school's final year of eligibility pursuant to
185 subdivision (1) of this subsection; (iii) for the third fiscal year following
186 the fiscal year such town received its final grant pursuant to
187 subdivision (1) of this subsection, in an amount that does not exceed
188 twenty-five per cent of the grant amount such town received for the
189 town's or school's final year of eligibility pursuant to subdivision (1) of
190 this subsection.

191 (e) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, and each fiscal year
192 thereafter, priority school districts and former priority school districts
193 shall receive grants based on the sum of the products obtained by (A)
194 multiplying the district's number of contracted slots on March thirtieth
195 of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year in which the grant is to be paid,
196 by the per child cost pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of
197 section 10-16q, except that such per child cost shall be reduced for slots
198 that are less than year-round, and (B) multiplying the number of
199 additional or decreased slots the districts have requested for the fiscal
200 year in which the grant is to be paid by the per child cost pursuant to
201 subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of said section 10-16q, except such per
202 child cost shall be reduced for slots that are less than year-round. If
203 said sum exceeds the available appropriation, such number of
204 requested additional slots shall be reduced, as determined by the
205 Commissioner of Education, to stay within the available appropriation.

206 (2) (A) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of
207 this section are not expended, the Commissioner of Education may use
208 such unexpended funds to support local school readiness programs in
209 satisfying the staff qualifications requirements of subparagraph (B) of
210 subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section. The local school
211 readiness programs shall use any such funds to provide assistance to
212 staff for the cost of higher education courses leading to an associate's
213 degree or a bachelor's degree. Local school readiness programs shall

214 apply for such unexpended funds in such program's application for a
215 school readiness grant pursuant to this section. The commissioner shall
216 determine how such unexpended funds shall be distributed and shall
217 require each staff person as a condition of receiving assistance from a
218 school readiness programs pursuant to this subdivision to obtain an
219 associate's or bachelor's degree to be employed in a position related to
220 early child education or child development in the state for three years
221 after receiving such associate's degree or bachelor's degree. If such staff
222 person is not employed in a position related to early child education or
223 child development in the state for three years, such staff person shall
224 repay the amount such staff person received to the Department of
225 Education as follows: (i) If the staff person is not employed in a
226 position related to early child education or child development in the
227 state or is so employed for less than one year, one hundred per cent;
228 and (ii) if the staff person is so employed for at least one year, but less
229 than three years, fifty per cent. The department shall use any such
230 repaid funds to provide assistance to other program staff for the cost of
231 higher education courses leading to an associate's degree or a
232 bachelor's degree. Any staff person receiving such assistance shall
233 annually submit a letter to the department attesting to such staff
234 person's employment in a position related to early child education or
235 child development in the state.

236 [(2)] (B) If funds appropriated for the purposes of subsection (c) of
237 this section are not expended pursuant to said subsection (c) or
238 subparagraph (A) of this subdivision, the Commissioner of Education
239 may use such unexpended funds to support local school readiness
240 programs. The commissioner may use such funds for purposes
241 including, but not limited to, [(A)] (i) assisting local school readiness
242 programs in meeting and maintaining accreditation requirements, [(B)]
243 (ii) providing training in implementing the preschool assessment and
244 curriculum frameworks, including training to enhance literacy
245 teaching skills, [(C)] (iii) developing a state-wide preschool curriculum,
246 [(D)] (iv) developing student assessments for students in grades
247 kindergarten to two, inclusive, [(E)] (v) developing and implementing

248 best practices for parents in supporting preschool and kindergarten
249 student learning, [(F)] (vi) developing and implementing strategies for
250 children to transition from preschool to kindergarten, [(G)] (vii)
251 providing for professional development, including assisting in career
252 ladder advancement, for school readiness staff, and [(H)] (viii)
253 providing supplemental grants to other towns that are eligible for
254 grants pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

255 (3) Notwithstanding subdivision (2) of this subsection, for the fiscal
256 years ending June 30, 2008, to June 30, 2011, inclusive, the Department
257 of Education may retain up to one hundred ninety-eight thousand two
258 hundred dollars of the amount appropriated for purposes of this
259 section for coordination, program evaluation and administration.

260 (f) Any school readiness program that receives funds pursuant to
261 this section or section 10-16u shall not discriminate on the basis of race,
262 color, national origin, gender, religion or disability. For purposes of
263 this section, a nonsectarian program means any public or private
264 school readiness program that is not violative of the Establishment
265 Clause of the Constitution of the State of Connecticut or the
266 Establishment Clause of the Constitution of the United States of
267 America.

268 (g) Subject to the provisions of this subsection, no funds received by
269 a town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-
270 16u shall be used to supplant federal, state or local funding received by
271 such town for early childhood education, provided a town may use an
272 amount determined in accordance with this subsection for
273 coordination, program evaluation and administration. Such amount
274 shall be at least twenty-five thousand dollars but not more than
275 seventy-five thousand dollars and shall be determined by the
276 Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of
277 Social Services, based on the school readiness grant award allocated to
278 the town pursuant to subsection (c) or (d) of this section or section 10-
279 16u and the number of operating sites for coordination, program
280 evaluation and administration. Such amount shall be increased by an

281 amount equal to local funding provided for early childhood education
282 coordination, program evaluation and administration, not to exceed
283 twenty-five thousand dollars. Each town that receives a grant pursuant
284 to said subsection (c) or (d) or section 10-16u shall designate a person
285 to be responsible for such coordination, program evaluation and
286 administration and to act as a liaison between the town and the
287 Departments of Education and Social Services. Each school readiness
288 program that receives funds pursuant to this section or section 10-16u
289 shall provide information to the department or the school readiness
290 council, as requested, that is necessary for purposes of any school
291 readiness program evaluation.

292 (h) For the first three years a town receives grants pursuant to this
293 section, such grants may be used, with the approval of the
294 commissioner, to prepare a facility or staff for operating a school
295 readiness program and shall be adjusted based on the number of days
296 of operation of a school readiness program if a shorter term of
297 operation is approved by the commissioner.

298 (i) A town may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible
299 children who reside in such town at an accredited school readiness
300 program located in another town. A regional school readiness council
301 may use grant funds to purchase spaces for eligible children who
302 reside in the region covered by the council at an accredited school
303 readiness program located outside such region.

304 (j) Children enrolled in school readiness programs funded pursuant
305 to this section shall not be counted (1) as resident students for
306 purposes of subdivision (22) of section 10-262f, or (2) in the
307 determination of average daily membership pursuant to subdivision
308 (2) of subsection (a) of section 10-261.

309 (k) Up to two per cent of the amount of the appropriation for this
310 section may be allocated to the competitive grant program pursuant to
311 subsection (d) of this section. The determination of the amount of such
312 allocation shall be made on or before August first."